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ABSTRACT

In order to achieve the expectations for children's learning stipulated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, greater attention needs to be given to child care policy and funding. This report details a study examining strategies in seven states that have integrated early education program standards in child care, by directly tying standards to funding. The strategies examined are: the delivery of state prekindergarten (Georgia, New Jersey, and New York) and Head Start (Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon) in child care settings, and the use of contracts that require standards for child care providers (California). The report is organized into four sections. Section 1 discusses why program standards are critical to meeting raised goals for education and why child care must be part of this strategy. Section 2 presents findings from a group of states in which program standards and oversight of child care centers that participate in these early education initiatives (both prekindergarten and Head Start) clearly exceeded those of the basic state licensing rules. This section also showcases California's experience with child care contracts as an example of the potential of this strategy. Section 3 describes how Georgia funded the integration of a state prekindergarten program into child care. Section 4 recommends goals for policy and future research. The report notes that perhaps the greatest barrier to integrating high program standards in child care is financial--with budget crises forcing many states to make policy changes that reduce access to child care subsidies--and cautions that reductions in early care and education investments will lead to greater costs in the long run. Appended are program standards by state. (Contains 86 endnotes.) (KB)

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Integrating Early Education Program Standards in Child Care

By Rachel Schumacher, Kate Irish, and Joan Lombardi

August 2003

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Introduction

For more than a decade, interest has grown in children's learning prior to entering school. In 1990, the National Education Goals Panel, created by the first President Bush and the 50 governors, set a goal that by the year 2000 all children would start school ready to learn. Research evidence has been mounting that the early years matter to children's later academic success. Backed by a booming economy in the mid- and late-1990s, a number of states invested in a wide range of early education initiatives. The call for education improvements has intensified with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, in which the federal government has raised expectations for all children's achievement, including children from disadvantaged backgrounds. This has, in turn, raised expectations that children in early care and education programs should achieve certain learning outcomes in order to be ready for school. However, child care policy and funding is often left out of this discussion. In order to achieve improved child outcomes, policymakers must invest in improved program standards in child care.

This report highlights examples of how seven states have integrated early education program standards in child care, as well as provided technical assistance, monitoring, and funding to child care providers willing to meet these standards.

Attaining better results in early education programs involves the use of program standards identified by research as associated with positive child outcomes. These standards include: child-to-staff ratio, group size, teacher qualifications, curriculum requirements, and comprehensive services. Historically, the federal Head Start program has relied on such standards, and, during the 1990s, many states have addressed some of these program standards in their early education efforts.

At the same time, another trend was affecting the nation's child care system: during the 1990s, welfare reform, the strong economy, and other factors resulted in a large increase in the number of low-income mothers in the workforce. As a result, more at-risk young children were spending time in out-of-home child care settings while their parents worked. Child care policy focused primarily on increasing the number of child care slots rather than ensuring quality early education—even though

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these children could have benefited from high-quality programs meeting high standards. State child care licensing standards and state and federal funding requirements primarily focus on assuring basic health and safety protections. Many states have tried to encourage higher standards by reimbursing providers of subsidized child care at higher levels if they already meet higher standards, but the vast majority of child care continues to be operated without high early education program standards required upfront.

While child care has remained apart from early education efforts in many states, some have sought to integrate early education program standards into child care by use of funding, technical assistance, incentives, and other support. Such efforts can be seen as advancing the goals of both strengthening the early education component of children's care settings and developing early education programs that are more responsive to the needs of working parents.

This study examines three strategies in seven states that have integrated program standards into child care by directly tying standards to funding: the delivery of state pre-kindergarten (Georgia, New Jersey, and New York) and Head Start (Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon) in child care settings and the use of contracts including required standards with child care providers (California).

Unfortunately, the promise of these emerging policy strategies is already in danger due to the current federal and state fiscal crises. One state has already discontinued its program, and the funding for the other initiatives has been threatened. States are dealing with serious declines in revenue, and federal programs are unlikely to receive major funding increases. This means that while the federal government sets ever more ambitious educational goals for children, it is not adequately investing in improving the program standards these children experience during their formative early learning years.

This paper:

- Discusses why program standards are critical to meeting raised goals for education and why child care must be part of this strategy;
- Presents findings from a group of states in which program standards and oversight of child care centers that participate in these early education initiatives (both pre-kindergarten and Head Start) clearly exceeded those of the basic state licensing rules;
- Showcases one state's experience with child care contracts as an example of the potential of that strategy;
- Describes how one state funded the integration of a state pre-kindergarten program into child care; and
- Recommends goals for policy and future research.

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Section I

Meeting Our National Education Goals: The Value of Program Standards in Early Education and the Opportunities Available in Child Care

Research has clearly demonstrated that program standards in early education help children, especially low-income children, succeed later in school and in life. In addition, investment in high-quality early education can produce future cost-savings for taxpayers and society in such areas as reduced expenditures on special education, in lower crime rates among participants, and in increased earnings of the participants and their mothers. With increasing rates of low-income mothers in the workforce, more young children find themselves in child care for more hours than ever before. Unfortunately, studies of child care supply have found that too many programs rate poor to mediocre on scales that measure early learning environments. This section focuses on the importance of program standards to early education and on the opportunity provided by child care settings to help children learn.

Why Program Standards Matter

Leaders in the United States are engaged in a debate about how best to increase school readiness, improve children's performance in school, and reduce future costs to our society of children who do not succeed in school. This discussion has accelerated in response to passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, which seeks to reduce the achievement gap for disadvantaged children in part by setting goals for minimum teacher qualifications and holding public schools accountable for standardized test scores.[1] With NCLB requiring annual testing starting in the third grade, policymakers have become increasingly concerned with how to improve opportunities for learning earlier, even prior to children's entry into the school house door. Business leaders, concerned about the quality of the future workforce, have also called for greater investment in preschool.[2] And, researchers have been able to document the potential long-term savings to taxpayers that early child-

What Are Program Standards?

By **program standards**, we mean requirements that early childhood programs have to ensure conditions in which children are more likely to learn. These include child group size, staff-child ratio, teacher education, required curriculum, and the nature and intensity of comprehensive services.

Others may use the term **standards** to describe:

Licensing Regulations—Basic health and safety requirements as determined by state rules for licensed providers.

Early Learning Standards/Outcomes—Expectations for what children should learn and be able to do by certain stages of development.

Each of these types of standards plays a key role in supporting children's development in early education. Licensing provides a basic foundation for health and safety of children, and program standards establish the preferred conditions of the early learning environment and teacher qualifications. Together these layers support and facilitate reaching the goals articulated in the early learning standards/outcomes.

hood programs with high-quality program standards have demonstrated.[3] This concerted attention to young children's learning provides a tremendous opportunity to promote access to such programs for all children, especially for low-income children.

The best early childhood programs maintain strong program standards—that is, they ensure the conditions in which children are more likely to learn. However, most recent Administration and Congressional policy has focused more on setting high outcome standards (sometimes called early learning standards), which focus instead on what children are *expected* to learn. Much less attention has been paid to improving the standards for the type, intensity, and quality of early childhood programs or to helping programs and teachers meet such goals. In fact, no minimum federal guidelines exist for quality in child care; instead, states each set their own basic licensing regulations to protect the health and safety of children.

Raising expectations for children's readiness without raising the quality of programs will do little to meet national education goals or to help children grow and learn. Research on early brain development indicates that a warm, responsive adult is critical to the healthy social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children.[4] The National Research Council (NRC) finds that a young child's secure, responsive relationship with a teacher is predictive of the child's behavior and school achievement when the child is older.[5] Certain program standards—teacher-child ratio, group size, and teacher education level—are associated with better early learning opportunities, because they help promote the conditions conducive to the positive teacher-child relationships so crucial for early development and learning.[6] The NRC's report, *Neurons to Neighborhoods*, concludes that high-quality, well-designed early intervention programs have a positive effect on children's cognitive and language development as well as on their social and emotional development.[7] A review of 36 studies of model early intervention programs found evidence linking high-quality early intervention programs serving disadvantaged children to short-term and long-term outcomes in academic attainment and prevention of delinquency.[8] However, there are inequities in access to center-based preschool programs between low- and high-income families.[9]

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Key research about the link between early education programs and long-term positive child outcomes comes from the Abecedarian Project,[10] the Chicago's Child-Parent Centers (CPC),[11] and the Perry Preschool study.[12] Abecedarian findings show that, by age 15, children who received the educational program scored higher on reading and math tests, showed decreases in grade retention, and were less likely to need special education.[13] When this same group was examined at age 21, the enhanced cognitive scores continued, and participants were more likely to be attending a four-year college.[14] A 15-year follow-up study of the CPC children indicates that participants in the educational program had significantly lower rates of special education placement, grade retention, juvenile arrest, and arrest for a violent crime.[15] According to the latest findings of the Perry Preschool study, participants in the early education program had significantly fewer arrests, higher earnings, and higher school completion.[16] Each of these three early childhood studies provided at-risk children with early education that met certain rigorous program standards, although they differed somewhat in the duration, type, and setting of the services.[17]

Research cited in NRC's *Eager to Learn* examined model programs with long-term effectiveness and "the following factors were found to be present in most programs:

- Curriculum content and learning processes that cultivate school-related skills and knowledge, with a heavy focus on language development,
- Qualified teaching staff who use reflective teaching practices aided by highly qualified supervisors,
- Low teacher-child ratios and small class sizes,
- Intense and coherent programming, and
- Collaborative relationships with parents."[18]

In addition to these key program standards, research suggests that provision of comprehensive health, family, nutrition, and social support services are necessary to promote school readiness for poor children. A focus on comprehensive services is particularly important for disadvantaged children who have less access to health care and nutrition and whose families may need additional social services or help accessing them.[19] Poor children are almost twice as likely to be reported in fair or poor health as non-poor children.[20] Poor children experience increased rates of low birth weight and infant mortality, growth stunting, and lead poisoning, factors that are associated with cognitive and emotional problems. For example, low birth weight is linked with physical disabilities, reduced IQ, and grade repetition. The NRC concludes that environmental factors play a crucial role in children's early years.[21] Because poor health can negatively affect children's ability to attend and perform well in school, it is important to address children's complete set of needs through immunizations, medical, dental, and mental health screenings, follow-up, and treatment, as well as by providing nutritious meals. A recent review of studies on health and nutrition services for low-income children indicates that children are less likely to receive physical and dental check-ups and follow-up care and tend to

have a less nutritional diet compared to children enrolled in Head Start, where these comprehensive services are a requirement of the program.[22] The model programs discussed above all included a component of comprehensive services. The Abecedarian Project provided pediatric medical care, family support social services, and nutritional supplements.[23] The CPC programs provided health and nutrition services, including health screening, speech therapy, and nursing and meal services, and involved parents through workshops and activities.[24] The Perry Preschool involved parents in the educational process through home visits.[25]

The consequences for not addressing the needs of poor and disadvantaged children are many. *Neurons to Neighborhoods* indicates that the family's socioeconomic status is powerfully associated with children's cognitive skills when they enter school and is predictive of later academic success.[26] Analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education's Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Cohort, indicates that children of lower socioeconomic status (SES)[27] begin school at a cognitive disadvantage, scoring lower on achievement tests in both reading and mathematics.[28] Children from low-SES families are almost twice as likely to repeat kindergarten as children in other SES categories.[29] These children are likely to have great difficulty meeting raised expectations for their school performance without early and sustained intervention.

Policymakers considering the costs and benefits of investing in early childhood programs meeting high standards may wish to consider the potential savings to taxpayers that have been suggested by research. Using a cost-benefit analysis of the Abecedarian Project, the National Institute for Early Education Research estimated that every dollar paid for the preschool program generates a four-dollar return to the children, their families, and all taxpayers.[30] This takes into account the increased earnings of the participants and their mothers, increased earnings of future generations, and savings to school districts because participants are less likely to require special education. However, the analysis does not account for any potential savings caused by the reduced crime rates that have been found in later years. Cost-benefit analyses of the CPC initiative and Perry Preschool, which included a variable on reduced crime rates, have estimated a $7 return on every dollar invested.[31]

Taken together, the current research demonstrates that key program standards, including staff-to-child ratios, teacher qualifications, and required curriculum, are crucial to improving early learning environments and potentially child outcomes. For children in poverty, additional standards governing the provision of comprehensive services are also needed to ensure access to health care and other services, as well as to support parents.

Why Child Care Matters

Child care—the care of children by someone other than a parent—has become a fact of life for most young children in this country. Between 1970 and 2001, the percentage of mothers with children from birth to age five who were employed grew from 28 to 59 percent.[32] Over 70 percent of children under age five with employed mothers are in the care of someone other than their parents for part of the day.[33] Children often spend many hours in child care arrangements, with 41 percent of

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children under the age of five with employed mothers in care for 35 hours or more in an average week, and an additional 25 percent in care between 15 and 34 hours a week.[34]

With an increasing number of young children in care, many for long hours every week, child care has become the new opportunity to promote the education and overall development of children.[35] However, this opportunity has been largely overlooked. Unlike public education, child care has been seen as a private responsibility, with limited public investment and oversight. As a result, child care and education have developed on separate tracks, as illustrated in both the minimal standards that govern child care and the policies that govern public child care funding.

Current federal and state child care laws, regulations, and monitoring do not assure that child care environments meet the conditions that are associated with better opportunities for child development. The major federal funding stream available for states to help parents pay for child care and to improve child care quality is the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Historically, CCDF has only included minimum protections for the health and safety of children, leaving specific program standards almost entirely up to state decision-making. In contrast, the law and regulations of the federal Head Start program, a federal-to-local grant program providing early education and health, social, nutrition, and other services to low-income children and families, require participating local programs to meet specific Head Start Program Performance Standards related to education and the scope and intensity of comprehensive services. Moreover, state officials have continued to focus largely on health and safety issues when addressing child care. Over the last few years, many states have begun to reimburse providers of subsidized child care with higher payment levels if they already meet higher standards, but the vast majority of child care continues to be operated without program standards required upfront, and without the financing that can help assure they can meet high-quality standards.[36]

Although all states have licensing requirements for formal child care providers, these regulations provide only a floor under which the health and safety of children in care may not fall. Such basic protections usually do not meet recommended program standards to enhance the quality of early learning experiences of children. For example, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) child care center accreditation criteria require a ratio of one teacher to no more than 10 preschool-age children (three- and four-year-olds). In 2002, only 19 states required that maximum ratio for four-year-olds, and 31 states required it for three-year-olds.[37] State licensing requirements are also minimal with regards to teacher education and experience; 30 states allow teachers in child care centers to work with children before receiving any pre-service training in early childhood development.[38] States rarely provide licensors with much pre-service training, nor do they provide sufficient funding to keep licensing caseloads below recommended levels.[39]

Other features of the child care market and the child care subsidy system in the United States present further challenges. Most child care is operated by private providers and paid for by parents on their own or with assistance from public subsidies. Most states rely heavily on vouchers to distribute child

Major National Research Council reports over the last three years have called for the integration of child care and education:

"What do we mean by child care? It is not just day care, given the growing numbers of children who require supervision while their parents work nontraditional and shifting hours. It is also not just care. Beneficial outcomes for children in child care are associated with settings that provide both nurturance and support for early learning and language development. Accordingly, previous distinctions between 'early education' or 'preschool' and 'day care' have unraveled."

—From *Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development* (p. 299)

"Education and care in the early years are two sides of the same coin. Research suggests that secure attachment improves both social competence and the ability to exploit learning opportunities.... ...Young children who are living in circumstances that place them at greater risk for school failure—including poverty, low level of maternal education, maternal depression, and other factors that can limit their access to opportunities and resources that enhance learning and development—are much more likely to succeed in school if they attend well-planned, high-quality early childhood programs."

— *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers* (p. 306, 308)

care subsidies, which often means that child care providers care for a mix of both subsidized and unsubsidized children. Given the fact that a program may only have a few subsidized children in a class, it is difficult for a voucher system to provide a sufficient amount of additional resources to facilitate higher standards in programs that need a lot of assistance.

Given these factors, studies of child care supply have found that the majority of centers rate poor to mediocre on widely used measures of early learning environments and program standards. While no nationally representative study has ever been conducted, a study in the early 1990s of 1,364 children at 10 research sites found that most child care settings were only fair in quality and that children in low-income families were more likely than children in high-income families to receive poor quality care.[40] In another comprehensive study of child care centers in four states conducted in the mid-1990s, researchers used the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) and the Infant Toddler Rating Scale (ITERS) to measure child care quality and found that only one in seven centers had an early childhood environment of sufficient quality to promote the cognitive development and socio-emotional functioning of children, while child care in one out of eight centers was of such poor quality as to threaten the health or safety of children.[41] To determine the level of quality, researchers examined such program factors as the quality of the early learning environment, staff-to-child ratios and group sizes, and teacher interactions with children. The quality of care for infants and toddlers was of greater concern, with only 8 percent considered high quality, while only 25 percent of preschool-age children were in centers earning high ratings on the quality of the environment.

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The emerging interest in including child care in the early education agenda is an opportunity that some states are recognizing in their efforts to ensure that they also meet the needs of working families. These investments can help states promote more equitable early learning opportunities for children and, in the long run, save on the costs of remedial education and other consequences of early school failure. The next section discusses three models states are using to tie program funding to program standards and to create more opportunities for children to prepare for school.

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Section II

Three Ways to Enhance Program Standards in Child Care: The Experiences of Seven States

This section describes seven states that provide examples of policy strategies that can be used to improve program standards in child care. First, we describe the three strategies we chose to highlight and why we selected these profiled states. Second, we report our findings on the program standards required by the pre-kindergarten and Head Start model initiatives, as compared to those required by state child care licensing rules. Third, we describe the potential to improve program standards through state child care subsidy contracts with child care providers.

Background on the Highlighted Strategies and States

State Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Until the 1990s, most state pre-kindergarten initiatives were delivered in public schools only. As states expanded their resources for universal pre-kindergarten initiatives, more states turned their attention to the child care centers where preschool children were already being served. More and more, states have concluded that they must build on the diversity of existing child care providers, rather than to try to absorb all these services into already overcrowded public schools—especially when the public is demanding smaller class sizes. This report focuses on three states with significant investments in state pre-kindergarten programs that rely on child care providers to reach more preschool children.

- **Georgia Pre-K:** Starting in 1995, Georgia set a goal to provide universal, free pre-kindergarten for every four-year-old in the state. The state developed a process that gave a variety of programs the opportunity to apply to become a Georgia Pre-K provider, including private child care providers. Now, about 70 percent of the state's four-year-olds are either in

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Georgia Pre-K or the federal Head Start program. In recent years, about 57 percent of the Georgia Pre-K providers were private, non-public school-based.[42]

- **New York State Universal Pre-Kindergarten:** In 1997, New York State began a process to expand pre-kindergarten services to all four-year-old children, although the state has not been able to devote enough funding to achieve that goal. The New York Pre-K legislation required that at least 10 percent of the funds a school district receives be subcontracted to community-based organizations. In the 2001-2002 program year, 64 percent of the children served in the state were in child care settings.[43]
- **New Jersey Abbott Districts Early Childhood Program Aid:** New Jersey established this program in 1996 in response to a state court case that mandated provision of better early education opportunities for three- and four-year-old children in 30 disadvantaged school districts. Each school district may choose to contract with community child care and Head Start providers to meet the mandate. In 2002-2003, 62 percent of the children served in the Abbott Districts early childhood programs received these services in child care settings.[44]

Head Start Delivered in Child Care Settings

Over the past decade, 18 states have increased opportunities for poor children and families to access the early education, comprehensive services, and family support required under federal Head Start Program Performance Standards by investing state dollars in Head Start-modeled programs. In order to reach more children than federal dollars allowed, states have replicated Head Start standards in existing child care center facilities, often encouraging collaboration with federal grantees in the process. We examine two states with prominent models of state-funded Head Start programs (Ohio and Oregon) and one with an Early Head Start replication model for children ages birth to three and pregnant mothers (Oklahoma).[45] Note that there are also many examples in states of federal-to-local funded Head Start programs that are partnering with child care providers meeting federal Head Start Program Performance Standards. In fact, about 10 percent of Head Start classrooms were operated by a child care center partner in 2002.[46] However, this report focuses on initiatives spearheaded by states to expand services and meet Head Start Program Performance Standards in child care.

State Contracts Directly with Child Care Providers

A recent CLASP survey of state data demonstrated that, while almost half the states use direct contracting with providers in their child care subsidy systems, few do so expressly to meet early education program standards—and rarely on a statewide basis.[47] However, 12 states reported contracting with child care providers that met program standards beyond state licensing requirements, and six states used contracts with family child care networks to stabilize and improve quality of care. Some of the additional standards states require included: smaller staff-child ratios, higher staff education/training levels, accreditation with the NAEYC, and specified contract performance standards.

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Most states did not require program standards in their contract programs that were significantly higher than state licensing standards across the measures on which we focus in this report. In part, this is because several of the states happened to have fairly stringent state licensing requirements to begin with on staff-child ratio, group size, and teacher education. In addition, states also seem to use contracts mostly to address supply deficits, and few indicated that the *primary* reason for the contracts was to improve child care quality.

We chose California as an illustration of the potential of contracts because the state has done more than any to attach higher standards to their contracts with child care providers. California has an extensive history with contracts as part of a mixed child care subsidy delivery system, has a large proportion of children in contracted programs, and has explicitly sought to use contracts to improve the standards and performance of child care centers.

Promoting Higher Program Standards and Monitoring in Child Care Centers Through Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start

In each of the six states with an early education program (Georgia, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon), our review found that their early education (pre-kindergarten and Head Start) program standard requirements and oversight of integrated child care centers exceeded those of the basic state licensing rules. Child care providers that participate in these initiatives are asked to meet more stringent standards, and they receive more monitoring and technical assistance than their non-participating peers. In one area, comprehensive services, state initiatives modeled after Head Start required much more extensive services than did the state pre-kindergarten initiatives.

As the last section described, research suggests that early childhood program standards are necessary in the following areas to help children learn and flourish:

- group size and staff-child ratio;
- teacher education;
- curriculum; and
- comprehensive services.

In addition, increased monitoring and technical assistance above and beyond the levels required for state licensure can help child care providers implement new program standards and increase accountability for them.

This section examines each one of these important program standards—and how each of the six states integrated them into their child care system. We compare the program standards governing all providers, including child care partners, in the state pre-kindergarten and Head Start initiatives to the standards governing state child care licensing regulations. Note that this study only compares pub-

lished state policy governing these initiatives and state child care licensing rules; it does not assess the quality of these state programs.

Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio

Research consistently shows that children's interactions and relationships with child care teachers have great influence on their cognitive and social development.[48] These interactions are influenced by structural features of the setting, including how many children are in a group or class and the number of children per staff member. A smaller group size and lower staff-child ratios allow teachers to focus more attention on children individually and to be more warm and responsive. NRC's *Eager to Learn* report finds that group size and staff-child ratios are program standards that influence the quality of early education programs and children's learning and development.[49] States generally require a maximum group size and staff-to-child ratio as part of the child care licensing regulations. Several organizations also recommend guidelines for quality child care around these standards. According to both the National Health and Safety Performance Standards and NAEYC recommendations, the threshold for four-year-olds being cared for in a child care center is a group size of 16-20 children and a teacher-to-child ratio of between 1:8 and 1:10.[50]

***Findings:** The early education programs (Head Start and pre-kindergarten) require smaller group sizes and lower staff-child ratios than the state child care licensing regulations in the six states we studied (see table on next page).*

The Head Start and prekindergarten programs require group sizes ranging from 15-20 and staff-child ratios of approximately 1:7 to 1:10. These requirements are significantly different than the state licensing requirements for these states. For example, in Georgia, the group size requirement for the Pre-K initiative is 18-20 and the staff-child ratio is 1:10, whereas the state licensing requirements for group size is 26 and the staff-child ratio is 1:18. The state-funded Head Start programs in Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon follow the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards, which are more stringent than the state licensing regulations in these states.

Teacher Education Requirements

The formal education level of teachers has consistently been linked to higher quality teacher-child interactions.[51] Child care teachers with more formal education are more likely to receive higher scores on the global quality rating scales used to measure overall program quality and teacher effectiveness.[52] There is evidence that specialized education and training in early childhood education and child development is linked with higher quality care, but a stronger connection has been found between the number of years of education and quality of care.[53] An examination of data from the Cost, Quality, and Outcome Study and the Florida Quality Improvement Study found that teachers with at least a bachelor's degree in early childhood education were more effective.[54] In addition, teachers with a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or an associate of arts degree provid-

GROUP SIZE AND STAFF-CHILD RATIO

Comparing State Child Care Licensing Regulations to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

	State Child Care Licensing Regulations		Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives	
	Group Size	*Staff-Child Ratio*	*Group Size*	*Staff-Child Ratio*
Pre-Kindergarten				
Georgia				
4-year-olds	36	1:18	18-20	1:10
New Jersey				
3-year-olds	20	1:10	15	2:15
4-year-olds	20	1:12	15	2:15
5-year-olds	20	1:15	15	2:15
New York[1]				
4-year-olds	21	1:8	18	1:9
			19-20	3:19-20[2]
Head Start (State Initiatives)				
Ohio				
3-year-olds	24	1:12	17	2:17
4- and 5-year-olds	28	1:14	20	1:10
Oregon				
3-year-olds	20	1:10	17	2:17
4- and 5-year-olds	20	1:10	20	1:10
Oklahoma (0-3)				
Infants[3]	8	1:4	8	1:4
Toddlers[4]	12	1:6	8	1:4
2-year-olds	16	1:8	8	1:4

Note: The above chart compares pre-kindergarten programs and Head Start programs delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations. The New Jersey program standards refer to the pre-kindergarten programs in Abbott school districts only.

1 In the New York City child care licensing regulations, the maximum group size is 20 and the ratio is 1:12. See http://www.nccic.org/statepro/newyork.html.

2 Classrooms of 18 are required to be staffed by one teacher and one paraprofessional. Classrooms of 19-20 children are required to be staffed by one teacher and two paraprofessionals.

3 0 to 9 months.

4 10 to 23 months.

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ed higher quality care than teachers with some college or a high school diploma and some workshops.

Findings: *In the six states we examined, the minimum teacher education qualifications are significantly higher for the early education programs than for the state's child care licensing regulations (see table below).*

The pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs delivered in child care settings generally require an advanced degree or CDA credential:

- New Jersey and New York pre-kindergarten programs require a bachelor's degree, and Georgia requires an associate's degree or a degree from a technical institute.
- All of the state Head Start initiatives adhere to the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards, which require at least a CDA credential. At the end of 2002, just over 50 percent of all Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs had an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in early childhood education or a related field, meeting a federal mandate to reach that goal by September 2003.[55]

The minimum education requirement in the state child care licensing regulations for these six states calls for a high school diploma or some combination of experience and college credits in early childhood education. The table below compares the minimum teacher education qualifications for the state child care licensing regulations to the education qualifications for the pre-kindergarten and state Head Start initiatives.

MINIMUM TEACHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS
Comparing State Child Care Licensing Regulations to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Pre-Kindergarten		
Georgia	High school diploma; OR GED AND one year's qualifying child care experience.	Technical institute diploma in early childhood care and education or child development; OR two-year associate's degree in early childhood education; OR Montessori diploma.
New Jersey	One year teaching experience in a group program for children under six years of age and one of the following: CDA; OR 15 credits in early childhood education or a related field; OR Certified Child Care Professional Certificate.	Newly hired teachers must have a bachelor's degree, enroll in the Department of Education's provisional teacher program, obtain appropriate early childhood education courses, AND obtain a teacher of Preschool through Grade Three certification within one year.[1]

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MINIMUM TEACHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS (continued)

Comparing State Child Care Licensing Regulations to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Pre-Kindergarten (continued)		
New York[2]	Two years direct experience related to caring for children AND CDA credential; OR 9 college credits in early childhood, child development or a related field.[3]	State teacher certification; under current law, all community-based organization universal pre-K teachers will need teacher certification by September 2004.[4]
Head Start (State Initiatives)		
Ohio	High school education OR completed a training program approved by the state department of human services or the state board of education.	Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards:[5] Child Development Associate (CDA) credential that is appropriate to the age of the children being served, OR a state-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a CDA.
Oregon	At least 1 year of qualifying teaching experience in child care center or comparable group care program, in the care of preschool children; OR completion of 15 credits (quarter system); OR 10 credits (semester system) of training at a college or university in a related area AND at least 6 months of qualifying teaching experience.	See federal Head Start Program Performance Standards above.
Oklahoma (0-3)	In the process of obtaining a GED for a period not to exceed 12 months.	See federal Head Start Program Performance Standards above.

Note: The above chart compares pre-kindergarten programs and Head Start programs delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations. The New Jersey program standards refer to the pre-kindergarten programs in Abbott school districts only. The minimum teacher qualifications described in this chart pertain to the teacher position that has the most direct interaction with the children—that is, the classroom teacher as opposed to a supervisory teacher position.

1 As part of the New Jersey Supreme Court case *Abbott v. Burke*, teachers in Abbott districts are required to obtain a bachelor's degree and early childhood certification. Already-hired teachers without these credentials have four years, or until September 2004, to obtain them. Existing teachers who have experience working with young children but lack academic credentials are required to make annual progress toward obtaining a bachelor's degree and a "teacher of Preschool through Grade 3" endorsement.

2 In New York City, the minimum qualifications for child care teachers is an Early Childhood Teacher Certification. See National Child Care Information Center. (2003, February). *Center Child Care Licensing Requirements: Minimum Pre-service Qualifications and Annual Ongoing Training Hours for Teachers and Master Teachers.* Available at: www.nccic.org/pubs/cclr-teachers2003.html.

3 New York Rules for Child Care Facilities, Part 418: Day Care Centers, 12/2/02, http://nrc.uchsc.edu/newyork/ny_4181TOC.htm. Data taken from the website but not verified by the state.

4 Section 3602-e of Education Law provides for a transition period for community-based organizations to come into compliance with the universal pre-K staff qualification requirements.

5 As part of the 1998 reauthorization process, Congress mandated that 50 percent of the Head Start teacher population attain an associate's degree or higher, with a specialization in early childhood education or a related field, by September 2003. In 2002, 51 percent of Head Start teachers had achieved this goal. In Ohio, all classroom teachers in the state-funded Head Start-child care programs must have a two-year associate's degree by 2007.

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Curriculum

Teachers and programs use a curriculum as a set of learning guidelines to ensure that they are addressing all of the areas of children's learning and development. A curriculum builds upon the teacher-child relationship and helps to engage children in appropriate early learning activities. *Eager to Learn* identifies the use of a curriculum as a common component among the model early education interventions. There are many different curriculum models available today. Because curriculum models vary in focus and are influenced by how they are implemented, it is difficult to compare one curriculum to another. The NRC concludes that having a "planned curriculum is better than having none," and that it is important for a curriculum to be developed based on knowledge about what children can learn and how they most effectively learn.[56]

***Findings:** In the six states we examined, the early education programs (Head Start and pre-kindergarten) required a curriculum and the state child care licensing regulations did not (see table below).*

All of the pre-kindergarten and state Head Start initiatives we studied require a written plan or curriculum, addressing various areas of learning and activities, while the state licensing regulations do not. The state child care licensing regulations call for a general set of planned activities and, in some cases, specify what those activities should be. However, there is no licensing requirement for a curriculum in any of the six states.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CURRICULUM
Comparing State Child Care Licensing Standards to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Pre-Kindergarten		
Georgia	*No specific curriculum requirements.*[1] Variety of daily activities must include: indoor and outdoor play; a balance of quiet and active periods; a balance of supervised free choice and caregiver-directed activities; individual, small group, and large group activities; large muscle activities; small muscle activities; language experiences; arts and crafts; dramatic play, rhythm, and music; nature and science experiences.	Programs choose from a set of 7 curricula or have their own locally developed curricula approved. The following must be provided for at least 5 hours per day: educational experiences in the areas of language/literacy development, math, science, music, art, and physical development.

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REQUIREMENTS FOR CURRICULUM (continued)

Comparing State Child Care Licensing Standards to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Pre-Kindergarten (continued)		
New Jersey	*No specific curriculum requirements.* Variety of planned activities must be geared to the age and developmental level of the children served, promote the development of language, thinking and problem-solving skills, curiosity, exploration, large and small muscles, social competence, self-esteem, and positive self-identity; be relevant to the cultural backgrounds of the children; and foster intercultural awareness.	School districts required to provide programs that meet the DOE's *Early Childhood Education Program Expectations: Standards of Quality* and are linked to NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards as well as NJ DOE's Abbott Preschool Implementation Guidelines. Not required to adopt a particular curriculum model to implement. Master teachers assist classroom staff in meeting the expectations.
New York	*No specific curriculum requirements.* The child day care center must establish a planned program of activities that are appropriate for the children in care, and that encourage normal progress in the development of cognitive, social, emotional, physical and language skills. Children must be provided with a program of self-initiated, group-initiated, and staff-initiated activities that are intellectually stimulating and foster self-reliance and social responsibility.	School districts must submit a plan to the State Department of Education Programs, which must be learner-centered, educationally based, and designed to: ▪ Meet the social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, cultural, and physical needs of all eligible children; ▪ Develop receptive and expressive communication skills; ▪ Promote English literacy through collaborative efforts between school and parents and using multiple approaches, which include creating an English literacy environment and providing opportunities for reading and writing; ▪ Provide transition to and continuity with the early elementary grades; ▪ Provide for experiences which are designed to influence a positive sense of self, recognizing the cultural, linguistic, and varied backgrounds, needs, interests, and developmental levels of each child; and ▪ Provide classrooms with instructional materials and equipment that allow for a balance of active and quiet play and individual and group activities.

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REQUIREMENTS FOR CURRICULUM (continued)
Comparing State Child Care Licensing Standards to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Head Start (State Initiatives)		
Ohio	*No specific curriculum requirements.* There are no specific requirements regarding curriculum; different curricula, philosophies, and methodologies that are developmentally appropriate are permissible.	Must have a curriculum that meets the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards. Head Start programs, in collaboration with parents, must implement a curriculum that: ▪ Supports each child's individual pattern of development and learning; ▪ Provides for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts, and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning, problem solving, and decision-making skills, which form a foundation for school readiness and later school success; ▪ Integrates all educational aspects of health, nutrition, and mental health services into program activities; ▪ Ensures that the program environment helps children develop emotional security and facility in social relationships; ▪ Enhances each child's understanding of self as an individual and as a member of a group; ▪ Provides each child with opportunities for success to help develop feelings of competence, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward learning; and ▪ Provides individual and small group experiences both indoors and outdoors.[2]
Oregon	*No specific curriculum requirements.* Program of activities must include: creative expression through the arts; dramatic play; gross motor development; fine motor development; music and movement; opportunities to listen and speak; concept development; appropriate sensory play; and a supervised nap or rest period.	See federal Head Start Program Performance Standards above.

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REQUIREMENTS FOR CURRICULUM (continued)
Comparing State Child Care Licensing Standards to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Head Start (State Initiatives) (continued)		
Oklahoma (0-3)	*No specific curriculum requirements.* Variety of learning areas, variety of learning activities, and daily schedule.	See federal Head Start Program Performance Standards above.

Note: The above chart compares pre-kindergarten programs and Head Start programs delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations. The New Jersey program standards refer to the pre-kindergarten programs in Abbott school districts only.

1 New York Rules for Child Care Facilities, Part 418: Day Care Centers, 12/3/01, http://nrc.uchsc.edu/newyork/ny_centerTOC.htm. Data taken from the website but not verified by the state.

2 Head Start Program Regulations and Program Guidance, 45 CFR 1304.21(c)(1).

Comprehensive Services

Preschool children from families with limited economic resources are more at risk for developmental delays, and they require services beyond educational enrichment in order to combat the effects of poverty on early childhood development and detect delays as early as possible. *Neurons to Neighborhoods* concludes that environmental factors play a crucial role in children's development, especially during the early years.[57] In many families, the poverty in which children grow up is exacerbated by other factors, including parents' minimal education and low English language proficiency. The National Center for Children in Poverty has identified risk factors associated with poverty that may impair children's development, including: inadequate nutrition, environmental toxins, diminished interaction due to maternal depression, trauma and abuse, lower quality child care, and parental substance abuse.[58] Poor children are more likely than children from higher income families to experience low birth weight and infant mortality, stunted growth, and lead poisoning—all factors that are linked with cognitive and emotional problems.[59]

Since low-income working families may have less access to health care, nutrition, and social services, it is particu-

The Importance of Resources and Technical Assistance

New Jersey's implementation of the Abbott preschool program's teacher education requirements demonstrates how additional resources and technical assistance are needed to meet raised expectations. The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled five years ago that all preschool children in the most disadvantaged school districts in the state must have access to early education programs taught by teachers with bachelor's degrees and early childhood certification within four years. At that time, the percentage of teachers in community-based child care programs with bachelor's degrees was 35 percent, and it is now 80 percent. State officials worked closely with the state colleges and universities to develop the higher education infrastructure to meet increased demand for non-traditional students in early childhood education studies. The state also funded scholarships, release time, and higher compensation for participating child care teachers.

Source: Coffman, J., & Lopez, M.E. (2003). *Raising Preschool Teacher Qualifications*. Montclair, NJ: The Schumann Fund of New Jersey.

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larly important for early education programs serving low-income children to focus on comprehensive services.[60] In this report, we use the Head Start Program Performance Standards as a benchmark because they were specifically designed to address the physical, social, emotional, and educational needs of low-income children and families. For example, Head Start Program Performance Standards require programs to assure that children receive medical, dental, and behavioral health screenings and to work with families to ensure children receive any treatment deemed necessary.[61] Among children served by Head Start in 2002, 13 percent were diagnosed with disabilities, and almost one-quarter of children who received medical screenings were diagnosed as needing follow-up medical treatment.[62] The Performance Standards also require programs to develop partnerships with families to help identify family goals and needs for social services, arrange for home visits, and provide necessary referrals or services.[63] Parental involvement in children's education, volunteer activities, and governance of Head Start programs are also key components of the required array of family supports.

***Findings:** Our review of comprehensive services in the early education programs in the six states found that (see table on p. 23):*

- *The state Head Start initiatives adhere to the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards, which call for a specific scope and intensity of comprehensive services.*
- *The pre-kindergarten programs require some services, but they are not comprehensive and are more limited in intensity than the Head Start-modeled programs.*
- *In contrast, the basic state child care licensing standards do not require any comprehensive services.*

Child care programs that deliver Head Start are required to meet federal Head Start Program Performance Standards. The performance standards are designed to ensure a holistic approach to early care involving both parental training and linkages to support services. These performance standards are very specific about what services are required and include physical, dental, and mental health referrals; nutritious meals; vision and hearing tests; immunizations; onsite family caseworkers; and home visits. However, most non-Head Start early education programs targeting low-income children do not provide such a complete set of services. According to a GAO report examining the early childhood services provided to disadvantaged children, non-Head Start child care centers were less likely to provide health and parent services than Head Start centers.[64] For example, 71 percent of Head Start centers provide physical exams compared to 8 percent of nonprofit centers and 2 percent of for-profit centers. A survey of state preschool programs indicates that state pre-kindergarten programs less consistently provide the comprehensive services that Head Start provides.[65]

The states with pre-kindergarten programs have less comprehensive approaches to low-income children's needs. New Jersey's Abbott pre-kindergarten program, which serves all preschool children in disadvantaged school districts, is required to provide vision, hearing, and dental screenings upon school entry, offer a family worker for every 45 children and their families, and meet nutritional needs. The Abbott pre-kindergarten program does not follow the Head Start standards in its parental involvement requirements nor use the same timeframe for screenings. In Georgia's universal pre-

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kindergarten program, the Office of School Readiness provides separate grant funding for family support and screening services only to programs that serve at-risk[66] children, but does not have extensive requirements for services. In New York's universal pre-kindergarten, programs must coordinate support services for eligible children and families, but the standard doesn't specify what types of services must be provided.

Child care licensing regulations do not require comprehensive services. Two states in this study,

PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES
Comparing State Child Care Licensing Regulations to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Pre-Kindergarten		
Georgia	No comprehensive services required.	The Office of School Readiness (OSR) provides separate grant funds to programs with at-risk children for family support and screening services. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and attend parent-focused activities if organized by the provider. At least two parent-teacher conferences must be offered per school year.
New Jersey	No comprehensive services required.	Abbott Districts and centers are required to provide vision, auditory, dental, height, and weight screenings of children upon entry into school district; to provide nurses and social workers and community and parent involvement specialists; and to meet nutritional needs. Centers are to provide one family worker for every 45 children and their families being served by the center. The family worker shall work with the center and the parents to ensure that the parents and their children obtain necessary health and social services.
New York	No comprehensive services required.	Programs must meet the needs of parents of eligible children, coordinate support services for children and families, and include parent involvement activities to support family participation in their child's educational program. Programs must be designed to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities and to meet the needs of English language learners. These efforts also must be described in the program plan.

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PROVISION OF COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES (continued)

Comparing State Child Care Licensing Regulations to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives
Head Start (State Initiatives)		
Ohio	No comprehensive services required, but centers must have a written plan that will encourage parental participation and keep parents informed about the program and its services on file and provide it to each parent. The plan shall include but not be limited to a standard complaint procedure, center activities for the parent to participate in, and staff-parent conferences.	Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards: Head Start provides a range of comprehensive services which include: addressing children's nutritional, health, and mental needs; providing opportunities to include parents in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education; providing medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health education programs for program staff, parents, and families.[1]
Oregon	No comprehensive services required.	See federal Head Start Program Performance Standards above.
Oklahoma (0-3)	No comprehensive services required, but each center is required to provide at least three of the following options: (1) parents welcomed in the center at all times; (2) conferences held at least once a year and at other times as needed to discuss children's progress; (3) a parent resource area with books, pamphlets, or articles on parenting; (4) parent meetings with guest speakers or special events; (5) parents are informed of the center's program through a parent's bulletin board, regular newsletter, or parent handbook; (6) parents participate in program and policy development through board involvement, planning meetings, or questionnaires.	See federal Head Start Program Performance Standards above.

Note: The above chart compares pre-kindergarten programs and Heat Start programs delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations. The New Jersey program standards refer to the pre-kindergarten programs in Abbott school districts only. Comprehensive services include social and health services for the children and their parents as well as parental involvement and parenting education.

1 Head Start Program Regulations, 45 CFR Part 1304.

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Oklahoma and Ohio, did have regulations requiring centers to address parental involvement in center activities.

Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Monitoring and technical assistance are tools that states can apply in their early education initiatives to help programs meet standards. Through the monitoring of program standards, states can assess the extent to which child care providers are adhering to the standards and, in effect, ensure the quality of early care and education being provided and identify areas for improvement. For example, according to a 2002 federal Early Head Start evaluation, children in Early Head Start programs with earlier full implementation of the Head Start Performance Standards had stronger impacts in comparison to programs that implemented the standards later or incompletely.[67] Head Start and Early Head Start programs are monitored through intensive on-site reviews by teams of experts and peer programs that last for one week, every three years.[68] This monitoring is in addition to any required under applicable state child care licensing rules. Monitoring enables states to identify programs that are not meeting program standards and to provide technical assistance and incentives for providers to meet standards and fulfill program objectives.

The level and type of monitoring and technical assistance is important. Most state child care monitoring does not address program quality; instead, it involves site visits once or twice a year to check that basic health and safety standards are being met. State monitoring varies in frequency and intensity. And while technical assistance is helpful in guiding child care providers to meet licensing regulations, most states provide limited technical assistance and follow-up. They generally only warn or close noncompliant programs, without offering intermediate steps.[69] This may be due, in part, to heavy caseloads for monitoring staff. According to a 2000 GAO report, only 11 states have caseloads at or below the recommended level of 75 facilities per inspector.[70] Oklahoma is one of the states below the recommended level, with a caseload of 56.[71]

***Findings:** In the states we examined, the early education programs (Head Start and pre-kindergarten) have additional monitoring processes for program content and standards, over and above the monitoring for state child care licensing regulations (see table on p. 26).*

The Head Start and pre-kindergarten programs conduct site visits to monitor program content and standards. For example, Georgia conducts site visits twice a year to monitor program administration, physical learning environment, instruction and curriculum, and kindergarten readiness—in addition to site visits for state licensing compliance.

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MONITORING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Comparing State Child Care Licensing Standards to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives (in addition to the state child care licensing regulation described in the left column)
Pre-Kindergarten		
Georgia	At least once yearly, licensing consultants of the Department of Human Resources' Office of Regulatory Services visit child care centers that are not participating in Georgia Pre-K to evaluate compliance with state licensing rules and give technical assistance on health/safety and developmentally appropriate activities.	At least twice yearly, the Office of School Readiness (OSR) visits each child care center for technical assistance and monitoring on the following topics: program administration, physical learning environment, instruction and curriculum, and kindergarten readiness. OSR is also responsible for the basic licensing function for all child care centers that have Georgia Pre-K classrooms.
New Jersey	The DHS Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) Licensing Bureau inspects every licensed child care center annually to enforce health, safety, and educational program requirements.	Individual Abbott school districts monitor and provide technical assistance to child care centers according to the terms of district contract with the centers. Technical assistance is usually given through Master Teachers and social workers. Each provider must participate in a self assessment and validation system in collaboration with community partners.
New York	The Office of Children and Family Services inspects 50 percent of registered child care providers on an annual basis.[1]	Universal pre-K site visits, Title I coordinated monitoring visits, school redesign visits, and submission of annual program and fiscal reports are required each year by the New York State Education Department. Community-based organizations may receive technical assistance, professional development, and support from the school districts.

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MONITORING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (continued)

Comparing State Child Care Licensing Standards to Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

Type of Initiative	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Early Education Initiatives (in addition to the state child care licensing regulation described in the left column)
Head Start (State Initiatives)		
Ohio	One announced and one unannounced site visit are conducted per year to monitor for state licensing standards by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Various agencies provide technical assistance and training to providers including resource and referral agencies and local Children's Services Boards. Providers access technical assistance through site visits, requests for assistance, and meetings.	The Ohio Department of Education assists with onsite review reports and process once a year. The state had contracted with the federal Head Start training and technical assistance provider—QNET—for these services, but that contract will end in August 2003.
Oregon	Twice yearly, Child Care Division staff visit child care centers to monitor and license programs. The monitoring process evaluates compliance with licensing rules. During monitoring visits and on an as-needed basis, technical assistance for meeting licensing standards is provided.	Child care centers are given technical assistance and monitoring on Head Start Program Performance Standards. Programs receive an in-depth monitoring review every three years.
Oklahoma (0-3)	A minimum of three site visits per year for state licensing compliance are conducted by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. Providers can request technical assistance through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development, local child care resource and referral agency, or their licensing specialist.	One site visit per year to monitor for Head Start Program Performance Standards and two other site visits each year for financial and programmatic monitoring are conducted by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce provides technical assistance on Head Start Program Performance Standards through site visits, and providers may contact staff for additional assistance.

Note: The above chart compares pre-kindergarten programs and Head Start programs delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations. The New Jersey program standards refer to the pre-kindergarten programs in Abbott school districts only.

1 New York Social Services Law 390(4).

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The Potential of Contracts to Increase Program Standards: The California Example

States need not be limited to increasing program standards for child care within the context of statewide early education initiatives. States may also do so through direct contracts with child care providers who serve low-income families. However, a recent CLASP study revealed no states using contracts to provide early education programs in child care that meet the program standards described in the last section.[72] Nevertheless, a set of states have required their contracted child care providers to meet one or more program standards higher than the state's basic licensing regulations. One of the best examples is California.

Findings: *CLASP's recent study of state child care contracting policies revealed (see tables on pp. 29 and 30):*

- *There are scattered examples of states using contracts to increase program standards, while most contracting states are not fully utilizing this potential.*
- *California contract policies appear to go further than any other state in requiring early education program standards beyond that required for licensed child care and in providing more monitoring and technical assistance for child care providers in the contract-based child care subsidy system.*

California is an example of how states can use contracts as a way to increase the quality of care through requiring providers to meet specific program standards. California served 271,375 children in 2001 through contracts with providers for center-based care for low-income children, migrant child care, on-site campus care, special needs care, and afterschool care.[73] California requires contract providers to meet more stringent requirements for staff-child ratio, group size, teacher education levels, comprehensive services, and monitoring than the state child care licensing standards. For example, teachers in contract programs are required to complete more than twice the college credits than are required in the state child care licensing regulations. In addition, contract providers must include in their programs a health and social service component that identifies the needs of the child and the family for health or social services, makes referrals, and conducts follow-up procedures to ensure that the needs have been met. California state child care licensing regulations do not include any provisions regarding comprehensive services. One area in which California does not use contracts to improve its program standards is curriculum. There is no curriculum requirement for contract providers or in the child care licensing regulations. See the table on p. 29 and the Appendix for more information on California's program standards.

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THE POTENTIAL OF CONTRACTS

Comparing California's Child Care Licensing Regulations to Its Standards for Subsidized Child Care Contract Providers

Program Standards	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Contract Providers
Staff-Child Ratio and Group Size	Infants: Ratio: 1:4 Group size: N/A[1] Toddlers: Ratio: 1:6 4- and 5-year-olds: Ratio: 1:12	Infants: Ratio: 1:3 Group size: 18[2] Toddlers: Ratio: 1:4 Group size: 16 4- and 5-year-olds: Ratio: 1:8 Group size: 24
Minimum Teacher Education	12 units of Early Childhood Education or Child Development; OR CDA.	24 units of Early Childhood Education or Child Development AND 16 general education units.
Curriculum	No set curriculum.	No set curriculum.
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services provided.	State regulations require that each contractor include in its program a health and social service component that identifies the needs of the child and the family for health or social services; refers a child and/or family to appropriate agencies; and conducts follow-up procedures with the parent to ensure that the needs have been met. In addition, each contractor needs to include in its program a nutrition component that ensures that the children have nutritious meals and snacks during the time in which they are in the program.

1 Maximum group size is determined during the Department of Education's application review.

2 The numbers listed represent the upper class limit based on the teacher-child ratio requirement. However, smaller group sizes are strongly recommended for infants and toddlers. For infants from birth to 8 months of age, the recommended group size is 6; for infants 8 to 18 months of age, the recommended group size is 9; and for toddlers aged 18 to 36 months, the recommended group size is 12.

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For participating contracted child care providers, California also requires additional monitoring on program standards and on meeting child and family outcomes beyond that required of child care licensing.

THE POTENTIAL OF CONTRACTS

Comparing California's Monitoring and Technical Assistance for Child Care Meeting Basic Licensing Regulations to Those Meeting Subsidized Child Care Contract Requirements

Program Standards	State Child Care Licensing Regulations	Program Standards for Contract Providers
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	Annual site visits for state licensing standards are conducted by the Department of Social Services. The California Department of Education monitors the Alternative Payment Program (APP) agencies that administer the state's voucher program, not the individual child care centers.	As part of a new monitoring system, Desired Results for Children and Families, the California Department of Education monitors contract programs for compliance using ITERS and ECERS ratings scales and record reviews on six key dimensions: standards, assessment, and accountability; teaching and learning; opportunity for equal access; staffing and professional growth; parent and community involvement; and governance and administration. The monitoring is conducted at the contract agency level, and, for smaller agencies, it may be at the site level, through site visits every three years. Providers complete self-reviews during the other two years.

Section III

A Case Study on Funding: How Georgia Pre-K Integrated Child Care

In general, higher program standards mean higher program costs. In order to take advantage of the early education opportunity presented by child care, policymakers must figure out ways to finance the cost of increasing program standards for child care providers above the minimum licensing requirements—in terms of staff-to-child ratios and group sizes, teacher qualifications, curriculum, and provision of comprehensive services—and to provide additional monitoring and technical assistance. To make these program standards viable for child care providers to meet—and affordable for parents—the increased costs must be covered by direct government funding tied to standards. Furthermore, while state pre-kindergarten initiatives and the federal Head Start program are usually offered at no cost to eligible poor families, child care is generally only partially subsidized, depending on the state income eligibility limit for child care subsidies. Many low- and moderate-income parents who do not qualify for Head Start or other fully subsidized programs cannot shoulder the full cost of high-quality early education programs, which means that state policymakers must set funding levels to assure that these programs are affordable.

In each of the six highlighted states with pre-kindergarten or state Head Start in this study, child care providers who participate in the state early education initiative have access to greater technical assistance and funding resources than their non-participating counterparts. The states or local school districts all offer participating providers direct funding through grants or contracts, requiring increased program standards as a condition of accepting these funds.[74] However, each state has approached the issue of funding differently. As a result, it is difficult to paint a consistent picture of how states are using early education dollars to support child care providers to meet higher program standards.

Georgia, however, offers a clear example of how a state is currently layering early education funding and requirements for program standards onto the foundation of state licensed child care centers to

deliver universal pre-kindergarten services in child care settings. We highlight Georgia because its program is no-cost, statewide, and almost universal (about 70 percent of four-year-old children are in the program), and because their funding structure addresses a range of program needs. The Georgia Pre-K program budget has expanded since its inception to create approved Georgia Pre-K classrooms in private child care centers, public schools, Head Start programs, and other agencies to serve 65,500 four-year-olds across the state.[75] The Pre-K initiative's current annual budget is about $245 million. In recent years, about 57 percent of the Georgia Pre-K providers were private, non-public school-based.[76]

In Georgia, the Office of School Readiness (OSR) approves individual program applications to be a Georgia Pre-K classroom. Providers must meet basic licensing standards, as well as additional program standards, such as the ones described in this report. Approved providers are awarded $8,000 in start-up funds and annual grants based on the projected number of children they will serve. The rate per child is graduated to provide more funding for classrooms with lead teachers who have higher education qualifications. This funding covers 180 6.5-hour days, or 36 32.5-hour weeks.[77] Providers must pay salaries tiered according to teacher education level. Payment rates are higher for the metro Atlanta region.

Payments Per Child in Private Sector Georgia Pre-K Program

Credential Level of Lead Teacher	Metro Atlanta Region Payment	Zone 2 & 3 Payment
Teacher Certification	$3,566	$3,248
Four-Year College Degree	$3,177	$2,858
Associate of Arts, Science, or Arts and Science with a focus in early childhood education; early childhood care and education or child development Vocational Degree; or a Montessori Diploma	$2,951	$2,632

Georgia Pre-K classrooms that offer additional services may receive more funding as well. For example, a Pre-K program that offers full-day, full-year services to low-income children qualifying for state subsidies can receive $55 per week for before- and after-school care and $80 per week for full-time summer care from the Department of Human Resources, Division of Family and Child Services (DFCS). A Georgia Pre-K provider serving low-income children could also apply for the additional OSR grant funds for a Resource Coordinator to provide family support and screening services to at-risk children and families in Georgia Pre-K. (Note that the services provided are not comparable to those required under Head Start Performance Standards.) At-risk children are defined as those eligi-

ble for Food Stamps, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the state's PeachCare health care program for low-income children.

The Georgia Pre-K rate for care of low-income children is more generous and rewards higher teacher qualifications more significantly than does the statewide rates paid in the state child care subsidy program. Under the regular state subsidy program, a child care center in the metro Atlanta area that cares full-day, full-year for a qualifying four-year-old is reimbursed after providing care at a rate of $80 per week for 52 weeks, about $4,160 a year. DFCS payment rates in non-metro Atlanta areas are much lower. (Note that 11 Georgia counties are currently offering differential child care subsidy payment rates based on program quality, but the incentive to meet higher standards is not yet statewide. Since not all counties in the metro region would be able to receive these higher payments, our example does not address them.[78]) The following chart shows how the combination of OSR and DFCS funds in a full-day, full-year Georgia Pre-K classroom compare to the basic child care subsidy rate (in a county without tiered payments) for a non-Pre-K classroom. These figures do not include any additional funds that a program could receive if it qualified for a Resource Coordinator, and those funding levels would vary depending on the particular program needs.

Metro Atlanta Payment Levels for Care and Education of a Four-Year-Old Child

Full-year, Full-day: Georgia Pre-K Compared to Licensed Child Care Center

Credential Level of Lead Teacher	Full-day, Full-year Georgia Pre-K with Before and After Care	Child Care Center Without Georgia Pre-K
Teacher Certification	$6,827	$4,160
Four-Year College Degree	$6,437	$4,160
Associate of Arts, Science, or Arts and Science in early childhood education; early childhood care and education or child development Vocational Degree; or a Montessori Diploma	$6,211	$4,160

In exchange for these additional funds, Georgia Pre-K providers meet the higher program standards outlined earlier, often resulting in better early learning environments. A study of Pre-K classrooms in the 1997-1998 program year found that on average they rated higher on the ECERS than child care programs reviewed in a set of other studies of early childhood providers. One-quarter of the programs were rated "good" to "excellent," and the average score was 4.66 on a 7-point scale, which is just below the "good" rating of 5. None were rated "inadequate" to promote child development. Researchers observed some evidence that programs may have improved over time, but the study was only continued for two years so there are no current data.[79]

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Georgia recognized that additional funding would be necessary in order to support the existing child care system to meet higher standards, and, by doing so, has created many more early education choices meeting much higher program standards than required by the state licensing law. This model program has only been able to extend such higher standards to the early learning choices for four-year-old children, and the budget for the program exceeds the child care subsidy program budget for assistance to children from birth to age 12. The state has been able to create Georgia Pre-K using state lottery funding, but this source is no longer expanding.

Section IV

Recommendations and Conclusion

Definite potential exists to improve the school readiness of young children by supporting increased programs standards in child care. To take advantage of this potential, states developing early education initiatives need to address the relationship their initiatives will have with the pre-existing child care landscape, taking advantage of increased interest in improving early learning opportunities for children to build partnerships with child care. A set of states with early childhood initiatives have already begun to take this important step. In addition, states can increase their use of contracts with child care providers to extend higher program standards to a broader population of children in child care each day, including children from birth to age 12. We suggest the following specific policy and research recommendations:

1. States interested in integrating early education initiatives into child care should include three fundamental components:
   - require program standards above and beyond basic state licensing requirements,
   - provide additional funding at levels sufficient to support the cost of meeting higher program standards, and
   - provide additional technical assistance and monitoring to child care providers.

Integrating higher program standards into child care programs requires additional funding, particularly to improve compensation and to attract and retain teachers meeting higher education requirements. Additional training and technical assistance will be needed to help programs meet higher standards.

2. When developing program standards for early childhood initiatives, states should set minimum requirements for staff-child ratios and group sizes, teacher education, and curriculum, and should consider meeting the minimum recommendations of NAEYC.

3. When developing state standards for programs serving poor or disadvantaged children, states should address comprehensive service needs of children and families by modeling them after the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

4. States should increase the use of provider contracts tied to higher standards through the child care subsidy system. While early education initiatives focus only on preschool-age children, using contracts has the added benefit of allowing states to improve the quality of services for children from birth through age 12. States should also explore using contracts to build networks of family child care providers as a mechanism to expand early learning opportunities beyond center-based programs and address the need for a diverse range of qualified providers.

5. The federal government and states should launch additional research projects to document and evaluate the development of state policy to integrate early education initiatives into child care settings. Questions should include: What are the various strategies states are using to integrate education program standards into child care settings? What are the cost implications of implementing each approach and helping programs achieve program standards? What approach is working best to achieve educational outcomes for children?

Conclusion

Perhaps the greatest barrier to integrating high program standards in child care is financial. States are experiencing the worst budget crises since World War II—with 46 states reporting revenues below forecasted levels as of January 2002.[80] States are being forced to cut child care and early education programs—including the ones profiled in this report. Since 2001, 23 states have made policy changes that reduced access to child care subsidies.[81] In Georgia, a state budget crisis may threaten the state lottery that was created, in part, to fund the Pre-K program.[82] In New York, the governor's budget zeroed out the Universal Pre-K program funding of $210 million, but the state legislature wrote the program back into the budget. While New Jersey's Abbott districts are somewhat protected by a judicial mandate, the state's child care subsidy program has sustained a $181 million cut, and the state has sought relief from the state Supreme Court with regard to some aspects of timing and implementation of the Abbott decision.[83] In Oklahoma, the First Start program has been discontinued. Ohio is in the process of restructuring the state Head Start program, which will sustain a nearly 41 percent cut in funding as of July 2003, and is now completely supported by TANF instead of state dollars. The state budget for next year anticipates restoration of these funds and increased full-day, full-year slots—although fewer children would be served overall.[84] As of June 2003, Ohio is restricting child care subsidy eligibility limits, increasing family co-payments, and freezing provider reimbursement rates that are based on 1998 market level rates.[85] In Oregon, the state's child care subsidy program was cut by $4 million. In California, the governor's budget proposal for state fiscal year 2004 calls for $216 million in child care cuts.[86] In addition, the California governor considered and then deferred a policy to move all responsibility for child care to counties, which would have effectively ended all the child care contracts that are currently managed by the state Department of Education.

Meeting Great Expectations

The national economy and state budget woes mean that investments needed to improve program standards and the early learning environments for children may suffer, as many states are struggling to maintain basic services. However, research indicates that it will be more costly in the long run if we don't take better advantage of the "opportunity time" that children spend in child care to prepare them for the great expectations we have for them in school. Our nation should invest in a system that better integrates the care and education of young children, including those in families with need for full-day, full-year services. We should build on the promise of the state early education initiatives and new uses of child care contracts described in this report that have sought to integrate program standards in child care.

Endnotes

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Appendix – Program Standards by State

Pre-Kindergarten Programs Delivered in Child Care Settings

Georgia

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Georgia Pre-K Program Standards[2]
Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio	For 4-year-olds: Class size: max. 36 Ratio: 1:18	For 4-year-olds: Class size: 18-20 Ratio: 1:10
Minimum Teacher Education Qualifications	High school diploma; OR GED AND one year's qualifying child care experience.	Technical institute diploma in early childhood care and education or child development; OR two-year Associate Degree in early childhood education; OR Montessori diploma.
Curriculum	*No specific curriculum requirements.* Variety of daily activities must include: indoor and outdoor play; a balance of quiet and active periods; a balance of supervised free choice and caregiver-directed activities; individual, small group, and large group activities; large muscle activities; small muscle activities; language experiences; arts and crafts; dramatic play; rhythm and music; nature and science experiences.	Programs choose from a set of 7 curricula or have their own locally developed curricula approved. The following must be provided for at least 5 hours per day: educational experiences in the areas of language/literacy development, math, science, music, art, and physical development.

continued...

Georgia (continued)		
Program Standards:	**State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]**	**Georgia Pre-K Program Standards[2]**
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services required.	The Office of School Readiness (OSR) provides separate grant funds to programs with at-risk children for family support and screening services. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and attend parent-focused activities if organized by the provider. At least two parent-teacher conferences must be offered per school year.
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	At least once yearly, licensing consultants of the Department of Human Resources' Office of Regulatory Services visit child care centers to evaluate compliance with state licensing rules and give technical assistance on health/safety and developmentally appropriate activities.	At least twice yearly, OSR visits each child care center for technical assistance and monitoring on the following topics: program administration, physical learning environment, instruction and curriculum, and kindergarten readiness. OSR is also responsible for the basic licensing function for all child care centers that have Georgia Pre-K classrooms.

Note: The above chart compares the programs standards for Georgia's pre-kindergarten program delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations.

1 Child Care Learning Centers Rules and Regulations, unless otherwise noted.

2 2003-2004 School Year Pre-K Providers' Operating Guidelines, unless otherwise noted.

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New Jersey		
Program Standards:	**State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]**	**Abbott District Early Childhood Program Standards[2]**
Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio	Group Size: 20 Ratio: 3-year-olds: 1:10 4-year-olds: 1:12 5-year-olds: 1:15	Group Size: 15 Ratio: 3-year-olds: 2:15 4-year-olds: 2:15 5-year-olds: 2:15
Minimum Teacher Education Qualifications	One year teaching experience in a group program for children under six years of age and one of the following: CDA; OR 15 credits in Early Child-hood Education or a related field; OR Certified Child Care Professional Certificate.[3]	Newly hired teachers must have a bachelor's degree, enroll in the state Department of Education's provisional teacher program, obtain appropriate early childhood education courses, AND obtain a teacher of Preschool through Grade Three certification within one year.[4]
Curriculum	*No specific curriculum requirements.* Variety of planned activities must be geared to the age and developmental level of the children served, promote the development of language, thinking and problem-solving skills, curiosity, exploration, large and small muscles, social competence, self-esteem, and positive self-identity; and be relevant to the cultural backgrounds of the children and that foster intercultural awareness.	School districts required to provide programs that meet the DOE's *Early Childhood Education Program Expectations: Standards of Quality* and are linked to NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards as well as NJ DOE's Abbott Preschool Implementation Guidelines. Not required to implement a particular curriculum model. Master teachers assist classroom staff in meeting the expectations.
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services required.	Abbott Districts and centers are required to provide children vision, auditory, dental, height, and weight screenings upon entry into the school district; provide nurses and social workers and community and parent involvement specialists; and meet nutritional needs. Centers are to provide one family worker for every 45 children and their families being served by the center.

continued...

New Jersey (continued)

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Abbott District Early Childhood Program Standards[2]
Comprehensive Services (continued)		The family worker shall work with the center and the parents to ensure that the parents and their children obtain necessary health and social services.
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	The DHS Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) Licensing Bureau inspects every licensed child care center annually to enforce health, safety, and educational program requirements.[5]	Individual Abbott school districts monitor and provide technical assistance to child care centers according to the terms of district contract with the centers. Technical assistance is usually given through Master Teachers and social workers. The DYFS monitors licensing requirements and provides a self assessment and validation system for centers.

Note: The above chart compares the program standards for the Abbott District pre-kindergarten program delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations. In its directive for Abbott prekinderdergarten programs, *Early Childhood Education Program Expectations: Standards of Quality*, the DOE also requires additional quality standards such as family involvement in aspects of program design and governance, the prioritization of professional development, developmentally appropriate practices, and recognition of cultural diversity.

1 New Jersey Chapter 122 Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers, unless otherwise noted.

2 Urban Education Reform Regulations in the Abbott Districts, Subchapter 3. Early Childhood Education, unless otherwise noted.

3 This is the minimum requirement for group teachers in New Jersey. The head teacher who is responsible for the curriculum, and sometimes also serves as the group teacher depending on the size of the center, must have a bachelor's degree and 6-9 credits in early childhood education and experience in a group program for children.

4 As part of the New Jersey Supreme Court case *Abbott v. Burke*, teachers in Abbott districts are required to obtain a bachelor's degree and early childhood certification. Already-hired teachers without these credentials had four years, or until September 2004, to obtain them. Existing teachers who have experience working with young children but lack academic credentials are required to make annual progress toward obtaining a bachelor's degree and a "teacher of Preschool through Grade 3" endorsement.

5 DHS website: http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dfd/childca.html.

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New York		
Program Standards:	**State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]**	**New York State Universal Pre-K Program Standards**
Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio	4-year-olds[2]: Group Size: 21 Ratio: 1:8	4-year-olds: Group Size: 20 Ratio: 1:9, 3:19-20[3]
Minimum Teacher Education Qualifications[4]	Two years direct experience related to caring for children AND CDA credential; OR 9 college credits in early childhood, child development or a related field.	State teacher certification; under current law all community-based organization universal pre-K teachers will need it by September of 2004.[5]
Curriculum	*No specific curriculum requirements.* The child day care center must establish a planned program of activities which are appropriate for the children in care, and which encourage normal progress in the development of cognitive, social, emotional, physical and language skills. Children must be provided with a program of self-initiated, group-initiated, and staff-initiated activities which are intellectually stimulating and foster self-reliance and social responsibility.	School districts must submit a plan to the State Department of Education. Programs must be learner-centered, educationally based and designed to: ■ Meet the social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional, cultural and physical needs of all eligible children; ■ Develop receptive and expressive communication skills; ■ Promote English literacy through collaborative efforts between school and parents and using multiple approaches, which include creating an English literacy environment and providing opportunities for reading and writing; ■ Provide transition to and continuity with the early elementary grades; ■ Provide for experiences which are designed to influence a positive sense of self, recognizing the cultural, linguistic and varied backgrounds, needs, interests and developmental levels of each child; and ■ Provide classrooms with instructional materials and equipment which allow for a balance of active and quiet play and individual and group activities.

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New York (continued)

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	NY State Universal Pre-K Program Standards
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services required.	Programs must meet the needs of parents of eligible children; coordinate support services for children and families; and include parent involvement activities to support family participation in their child's educational program. Programs must be designed to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities and to meet the needs of English language learners. These efforts also must be described in the program plan.
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	The Office of Children and Family Services inspects 50 percent of registered child care providers on an annual basis.[6]	Universal Pre-K site visits, Title I coordinated monitoring visits, school redesign visits, and submission of annual program and fiscal reports are required each year by the New York State Education Department. Community-based organizations receive technical assistance, professional development, and support from the school districts.

Note: The above chart compares the programs standards for New York's pre-kindergarten program delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations.

1 New York Rules for Child Care Facilities, Part 418. Day Care Centers, 12/2/02, http://nrc.uchsc.edu/newyork/ny_4181TOC.htm. Unless otherwise noted, not verified by state.

2 In the New York City child care licensing regulations, the maximum group size is 20 and the ratio is 1:12. See http://www.nccic.org/statepro/newyork.html.

3 Classrooms of 18 are required to be staffed by one teacher and one paraprofessional. Classrooms of 19-20 children are required to be staffed by one teacher and two paraprofessionals.

4 In New York City the minimum qualifications for child care teachers is an Early Childhood Teacher Certification. See National Child Care Information Center. (2003, February). *Center Child Care Licensing Requirements: Minimum Pre-service Qualifications and Annual Ongoing Training Hours for Teachers and Master Teachers.* Available at: www.nccic.org/pubs/cclr-teachers2003.html.

5 Section 3602-e of Education Law provides for a transition period for community-based organizations to come into compliance with the UPK staff qualification requirements.

6 New York Social Services Law 390(4).

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Head Start Delivered in Child Care Settings

Ohio

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Ohio State-Funded Head Start Program Standards
Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio	Group Size: 3-year-olds: 24 4-year-olds: 28 Ratio: 3-year-olds: 1:12 4-year-olds: 1:14	Group Size: 3-year-olds: 17 4-year-olds: 20 Ratio: 3-year-olds: 2:17 4-year-olds: 1:10
Minimum Teacher Education Qualifications	High school education OR completed a training program approved by the state department of human services or the state board of education.	Federal Head Start Performance Standards: Child Development Associate (CDA) credential that is appropriate to the age of the children being served, OR a state-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a CDA.[2]
Curriculum	*No specific curriculum requirements.* There are no specific requirements regarding curriculum; different curricula, philosophies, and methodologies that are developmentally appropriate are permissible.	Must have a curriculum which meets the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards. Head Start programs, in collaboration with parents, must implement a curriculum that: ■ Supports each child's individual pattern of development and learning; ■ Provides for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts, and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning, problem solving and decision-making skills which form a foundation for school readiness and later school success; ■ Integrates all educational aspects of health, nutrition, and mental health services into program activities;

continued...

Ohio (continued)

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Ohio State-Funded Head Start Program Standards
Curriculum (continued)		■ Ensures that the program environment helps children develop emotional security and facility in social relationships; ■ Enhances each child's understanding of self as an individual and as a member of a group; ■ Provides each child with opportunities for success to help develop feelings of competence, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward learning; and ■ Provides individual and small group experiences both indoors and outdoors.[3]
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services required, but centers must have a written plan that will encourage parental participation and keep parents informed about the program and its services on file. They must provide a plan to each parent. The plan shall include but not be limited to a standard complaint procedure, center activities for the parent to participate in, and staff-parent conferences.	Federal Head Start Performance Standards: Head Start provides a range of comprehensive services which include[4]: addressing children's nutritional, health, and mental needs; providing opportunities to include parents in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education; and providing medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health education programs for program staff, parents, and families.

continued...

Ohio (continued)

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Ohio State-Funded Head Start Program Standards
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	One announced and one unannounced site visit are conducted per year to monitor for state licensing standards by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Various agencies provide technical assistance and training to providers, including resource and referral agencies and local Children's Services Boards. Providers access technical assistance through site visits, requests for assistance, and meetings.	The Ohio Department of Education assists with onsite review reports and process once a year. The state has contracted with the federal Head Start training and technical assistance provider—QNET—for these services, but that contract will end in August 2003.

Note: The above chart compares the program standards for Ohio's Head Start program delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations.

1 Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Day Care Center Licensing (1995, June). Available at: http://nrc.uchsc.edu/ohio/oh_3TOC.htm. Unless otherwise noted, not confirmed by state.

2 As part of the 1998 reauthorization process, Congress mandated that 50 percent of the Head Start teacher population attain an associate's degree or higher, with a specialization in early childhood education or a related field, by September 2003. In Ohio, all classroom teachers in the state-funded Head Start-child care programs must have a 2-year associate's degree by 2007.

3 45 CFR 1304.50

4 Head Start Program Regulations, 45 CFR Part 1304.

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Oregon		
Program Standards:	**State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]**	**Oregon State-Funded Head Start Program Standards**
Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio	3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds:[2] Class size: 20 Ratio: 1:10	3-year-olds: Class size: 17 Ratio: 2:17 4- and 5-year-olds: Class size: 20 Ratio: 1:10
Minimum Teacher Education Qualifications	At least 1 year of qualifying teaching experience in child care center or comparable group care program, in the care of preschool children; OR completion of 15 credits (quarter system); OR 10 credits (semester system) of training at a college or university in a related area AND at least 6 months of qualifying teaching experience.	Federal Head Start Performance Standards:[3] Child Development Associate (CDA) credential that is appropriate to the age of the children being served, OR a state-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a CDA.
Curriculum	*No specific curriculum requirements.* Program of activities must include: creative expression through the arts; dramatic play; gross motor development; fine motor development; music and movement; opportunities to listen and speak; concept development; appropriate sensory play; and a supervised nap or rest period.	Must have a curriculum which meets the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards. Head Start programs, in collaboration with parents, must implement a curriculum that: ■ Supports each child's individual pattern of development and learning; ■ Provides for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts, and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning, problem solving and decision-making skills that form a foundation for school readiness and later school success;

continued...

Oregon (continued)

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Oregon State-Funded Head Start Program Standards
Curriculum (continued)		■ Integrates all educational aspects of health, nutrition, and mental health services into program activities; ■ Ensures that the program environment helps children develop emotional security and facility in social relationships; ■ Enhances each child's understanding of self as an individual and as a member of a group; ■ Provides each child with opportunities for success to help develop feelings of competence, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward learning; and ■ Provides individual and small group experiences both indoors and outdoors.[4]
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services required.	Federal Head Start Performance Standards: Head Start provides a range of comprehensive services, which include[5]: addressing children's nutritional, health, and mental needs; providing opportunities to include parents in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education; providing medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health education programs for program staff, parents, and families.

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Oregon (continued)

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Oregon State-Funded Head Start Program Standards
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	Twice yearly, Child Care Division staff visit child care centers to monitor and license programs. The monitoring process evaluates compliance with licensing rules. During monitoring visits and on an as-needed basis, technical assistance for meeting licensing standards is provided.	Child care centers are given technical assistance and monitoring on Head Start Performance Standards. Programs receive an in-depth monitoring review every three years.

Note: The above chart compares the programs standards for Oregon's Head Start program delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations.

1 Oregon Child Care Division: Rules for Certification of Child Care Centers (http://nrc.uchsc.edu/oregon/or_centersTOC.html), unless otherwise noted.

2 If child is attending kindergarten, the ratio is 1:15 and group size is 50.

3 As part of the 1998 reauthorization process, Congress mandated that 50 percent of the Head Start teacher population attain an associate's degree or higher, with a specialization in early childhood education or a related field, by September 2003.

4 45 CFR 1304.50

5 Head Start Program Regulations, 45 CFR Part 1304.

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Oklahoma		
Program Standards:	**State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]**	**Oklahoma First Start (0-3) Program Standards**
Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio	Infants (0-9 months): Group Size: 8 Ratio: 1:4 Toddlers (10-23 months): Group Size: 12 Ratio: 1:6 2-year-olds: Group Size: 16 Ratio: 1:8	Infants, Toddlers, and 2-year-olds: Group Size: 8 Ratio: 1:4
Minimum Teacher Education Qualifications	In the process of obtaining a GED for a period not to exceed 12 months.	Federal Head Start Performance Standards:[2] Child Development Associate (CDA) credential that is appropriate to the age of the children being served, OR a state-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a CDA.
Curriculum	*No specific curriculum requirements.* Variety of learning areas, variety of learning activities, and daily schedule.	Must have a curriculum which meets the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards. Head Start programs, in collaboration with parents, must implement a curriculum that: ■ Supports each child's individual pattern of development and learning; ■ Provides for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts, and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning, problem solving, and decision-making skills which form a foundation for school readiness and later school success;

continued...

Oklahoma (continued)

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	Oklahoma First Start (0-3) Program Standards
Curriculum (continued)		■ Integrates all educational aspects of health, nutrition, and mental health services into program activities; ■ Ensures that the program environment helps children develop emotional security and facility in social relationships; ■ Enhances each child's understanding of self as an individual and as a member of a group; ■ Provides each child with opportunities for success to help develop feelings of competence, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward learning; and ■ Provides individual and small group experiences both indoors and outdoors.[3]
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services required, but each center is required to provide at least three of the following options: (1) parents welcomed in the center at all times; (2) conferences held at least once a year and at other times as needed to discuss children's progress; (3) a parent resource area with books, pamphlets, or articles on parenting; (4) parent meetings with guest speakers or special events; (5) parents are informed of the center's program through a parent's bulletin board, regular newsletter, or parent handbook;	Federal Head Start Performance Standards: Head Start provides a range of comprehensive services which include:[4] addressing children's nutritional, health, and mental needs; providing opportunities to include parents in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education; providing medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health education programs for program staff, parents, and families.

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Oklahoma (continued)		
Program Standards:	**State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]**	**Oklahoma First Start (0-3) Program Standards**
Comprehensive Services (continued)	(6) parents participate in program and policy development through board involvement, planning meetings, or questionnaires.	
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	A minimum of three site visits per year for state licensing compliance are conducted by the Oklahoma Department of Human Services. Providers can request technical assistance through the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development, local child care resource and referral agency, or their licensing specialist.	One site visit per year to monitor for Head Start Performance Standards and two other site visits each year for financial and programmatic monitoring are conducted by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce provides technical assistance around Head Start Performance Standards through site visits, and providers may contact staff for additional assistance.

Note: The above chart compares the programs standards for Oklahoma's First Start program (serving children 0-3) delivered in child care centers to the state's child care licensing regulations.

1 Child Care Learning Centers Rules and Regulations, unless otherwise noted.

2 As part of the 1998 reauthorization process, Congress mandated that 50 percent of the Head Start teacher population attain an associate's degree or higher, with a specialization in early childhood education or a related field, by September 2003.

3 45 CFR 1304.50

4 Head Start Program Regulations, 45 CFR Part 1304.

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Direct Contracts with Providers

California

Program Standards:	State Child Care Licensing Regulations[1]	California Program Standards for Contract Providers
Group Size and Staff-Child Ratio	Infants: Group Size: N/A[1] Ratio: 1:4 Toddlers: Ratio: 1:6 4- and 5-year-olds: Ratio: 1:12	Infants: Group Size: 18[2] Ratio: 1:3 Toddlers: Group Size: 16 Ratio: 1:4 4- and 5-year-olds: Group Size: 24 Ratio: 1:8
Minimum Teacher Education Requirements	12 units of Early Childhood Education or Child Development; OR CDA.	24 units of Early Childhood Education or Child Development and 16 general education units.
Curriculum	No set curriculum. The state has Prekindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines.[3]	No set curriculum. The state has Prekindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines.[3]
Comprehensive Services	No comprehensive services provided.	State regulations require that each contractor include in its program a health and social service component that identifies the needs of the child and the family for health or social services; refers a child and/or family to appropriate agencies; and conducts follow-up procedures with the parent to ensure that the needs have been met. In addition, each contractor needs to include in its program a nutrition component that ensures that the children have nutritious meals and snacks during the time in which they are in the program.

California (continued)		
Program Standards:	**State Child Care Licensing Regulations**[1]	**California Program Standards for Contract Providers**
Monitoring and Technical Assistance	Annual site visits for state licensing standards are conducted by the Department of Social Services. The California Department of Education monitors the Alternative Payment Program (APP) agencies that administer the state's voucher program, not the individual child care centers.	As part of a new monitoring system, Desired Results for Children and Families, the California Department of Education monitors contract programs for compliance using ITERS and ECERS ratings scales and record reviews on six key dimensions: standards, assessment, and accountability; teaching and learning; opportunity for equal access; staffing and professional growth; parent and community involvement; and governance and administration. The monitoring is conducted at the contract agency level and for smaller agencies, it may be at the site level, through site visits every three years. Providers complete self-reviews during the other two years.

Note: The above chart compares the programs standards for California's subsidized contract providers to the state's child care licensing regulations.

1 Maximum group size is determined during the Department of Education's application review.

2 The numbers listed represent the upper class limit based on the teacher-child ratio requirement. However, smaller group sizes are strongly recommended for infants and toddlers. For infants from birth to 8 months of age, the recommended group size is 6; for infants 8 to 18 months of age, the recommended group size is 9; and for toddlers aged 18 to 36 months, the recommended group size is 12.

3 California has published a curriculum framework, *Prekindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines*, that provides specific guidance for prekindergarten teachers on how to design and offer a program to achieve desired results for children and families who participate in group care settings. The *Prekindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines* are articulated with the state's academic content and performance standards, including mathematics, reading, and language development.

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